Nash Healey Car club

NASH
HEALEY
NEWS

July 1985
Issue No. 31

ORBISONIA MEET - June 15 by Ray Soles, Jr.

With the auto meet season in full swing I would guess our Club members are busy every weekend in one part of the country or another.

The members in Pennsylvania and nearby states were invited to attend a meet held at the home of N.C.C.A. member Lew and Kay Brown. I am not sure of the count of Nash cars drawn but there were plenty. Lew and Kay have a very nice and somewhat unique collection of 35 Nash related automobiles. It's not every show that includes 1957 Rebels and at least one Nash family album car (the 70-72 Gremlin Idea car). I was told later in the week by my mother, our Club treasurer Mary Soles, that I missed a wonderful banquet. Next year I won't make that mistake.

The photos included in this meet write-up are somewhat unique also. They show a contrast of old and new-old. The Healey in the center of these photos is the new-old Healey of F. Winston Johns of Virginia. This was the first show for a two year restoration, and the time and money was well spent (looks good Winston). We, the club, have been promised a full run down on the two year restoration project of this shiny black Healey. I am looking forward to reading another story about another great car.

The old part of old and new-old is meant for the reliable Healeys of Ray Schell left in the photos and of Ray Soles, Sr., right in the photos. Ray & Ray have been driving these Healeys to meets in the East and Nationals in Kenosha for as long as there have been Nationals.

If any members have some photographs of meets attended this year or in the past years, send them in with a small story. I'm sure all the members would love to see and hear about what other members are doing. I think there are a lot of stories out there similar to the ones written by Mr. Loudon (issue #28) and Mr. McLees (issue #30).

Ray Schell
F. Winston Johns
Ray Soles, Sr.

Ray Schell
F. Winston Johns
Ray Soles, Sr.

Nash-Healey *continued*

of the Nash engine. The bore size was increased to raise the swept cylinder volume to 4,138 c.c., compression ratio was raised to 8.25 to 1, and twin Carter horizontal carburetters replaced the S.U.s. These modifications brought the peak power output up to 135 b.h.p. at 4,000 r.p.m.

In 1952, Italian mastery of the Mille Miglia was threatened by the highly organised entry of new Mercedes to be driven by Caracciola, Lang and Kling. The British flag was carried by Aston Martin and two Nash-Healeys; the coupé prototype for Donald and Geoffrey Healey and a second car for Leslie Johnson and W. McKenzie. From the traditional starting control at Brescia, local interest was centred on the exciting duel between the new Mercedes and the local Ferraris, but British enthusiasts were more excited to find the two Healeys pacing both German and Italian teams and running high in general classification. After 200 miles Donald Healey's run was brought to an unhappy finish when a tyre burst on a tricky bend. The coupé was badly damaged in a spectacular crash, but fortunately both the crew stepped unscathed from the incident. Meanwhile Johnson and McKenzie were enjoying better fortune with the other Healey entry, and they were well placed despite shock absorber troubles which had caused them some delay on the mountain stages. At the finish their Healey had climbed to seventh place overall and they were fourth in their class behind the winning Ferrari and the two team Mercedes. This performance of the Nash-Healey had surpassed even the past Mille Miglia achievements of the Healey Saloons and Roadsters, recounted in the opening article of this series.

A MAGNIFICENT LE MANS

At Le Mans, too, it was the turn of Mercedes in 1952, but it was also a great year for Warwick. Healeys entered two cars, one of them the 1951 coupé now remodelled as an open car to be driven by Leslie Johnson and Tommy Wisdom. The second entry was the original 1950 prototype entered for two French drivers, Giraud-Cabantous and Pierre Veyron. This car was fitted with a British-designed experimental cylinder head with hemispherical combustion chambers and inclined valves with vertical and horizontal pushrods, these modifications raising the power output to around 200 b.h.p.

From the start it was the customary Grand Prix between Ferrari, Cunningham and Jaguar with Mercedes playing the waiting game. The Healey team suffered an early disappointment when the Cabantous/Veyron entry was retired with engine troubles. The battle continued amongst the leaders, and it was not until after 16 hours of racing that the Johnson/Wisdom car appeared on the leader-board in sixth place. The order now was Talbot, the two Mercedes, Aston Martin, a second Talbot and then the Healey. The order remained unchanged through the morning, but just before mid-day the Healey, lapping consistently at around 94 m.p.h., moved up to fifth place behind the Aston Martin.

With four hours of racing to the finish, the results seemed established, the leading Talbot touring round with a 4-lap advantage over the two Mercedes, and the Aston Martin comfortably in fourth place ahead of the Healey. No-one, least of all the Healey team, anticipated the sudden change of fortunes which was to alter the whole pattern of the race. First the Aston Martin came into the pits with rear axle trouble, allowing Johnson and Wisdom to take the Healey through into fourth place behind the Mercedes. Then, in the last hour, the leading Talbot retired with bearing failure, leaving Mercedes with a safe first and second places and the Healey secure in third place. The German cars held an unassailable lead, and all that was asked of the Healey was to last the distance as the final minutes ticked by.

Besides finishing third overall, the Healey also collected a class win, second place in the Index of Performance and, of

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Nash-Healey *continued*

course, the *Motor* award for the first British car to finish. Johnson and Wisdom had covered a distance of 2,196 miles averaging 91.5 m.p.h. This certainly brought great credit to the small Warwick factory, for with a car which had already completed one Le Mans race, Donald Healey and his team had defeated the might of works entries from Ferrari, Cunningham, Talbot, Aston Martin and Jaguar—all, in fact, except the invincible Mercedes. It was truly the marque's finest racing achievement, yet to be surpassed.

The final sortie to the Mille Miglia with the Nash-Healey was made in 1953, with a special-bodied car fitted with the larger 4.1-litre engine. A Laycock overdrive was used in place of the Borg Warner unit. The two-seater streamlined bodywork reduced drag to a minimum; with its overall length of 15 ft. and its 4.1 litre engine, this car must surely rank as the largest and most powerful Healey ever built. American John Fitch drove this mighty Healey special, but unhappily did not have a fair chance to demonstrate its potential. A brake pipe fractured towards the end of the first stage from Brescia to Ravenna, and although every effort was made to effect a satisfactory repair, the car had to be retired.

At Le Mans in 1953, the Healey team's main responsibility was, of course, the running of two new Austin-Healey '100's, making their racing debut at Le Mans. The story of their remarkable display of high-speed reliability is reserved for a future chapter of Healey history. Also entered in the 1953 24 Hour Race were a pair of Nash-Healeys for Leslie Johnson and Bert Hadley and the French drivers Cabantous and Veyron. The Healey team could hardly have expected to repeat the previous year's success, running cars which had already completed many hours of racing, and against even stronger works entries from rival teams. For the second year the French crew retired their car in the early stages, but Johnson and Hadley soldiered on to finish 11th overall, completing a greater distance than in 1952 at an average speed of 92.5 m.p.h. This race speed stands as a record yet to be broken by any Healey or Austin-Healey model.

OTHER SUCCESSES

Apart from the achievements in the Mille Miglia and at Le Mans, the Nash-Healeys appear to have gained few successes in other events either at home or overseas. In June 1951 Tony Rolt took sixth place in the B.R.D.C. Production Sports Car Race at Silverstone, the Healey and Parnell's Aston Martin battling hard to break up the complete domination of the race by the new XK Jaguars. The Nash-Healey's race speed on this occasion was 81.8 m.p.h. Shortly after this Reg Parnell drove a Nash-Healey in the British Empire Trophy Race in the Isle of Man, but he was forced to retire with a broken gear-lever when well placed. The sole international rally entry for the Nash-Healey has been traced to the 1952 Alpine Rally, when Edgar Wadsworth lost a potential Coupe des Alpes through a crash on the Stelvio.

These achievements were somewhat eclipsed by the efforts of the works entries which, in the years 1951 to 1953, furthered the marque's reputation in the Mille Miglia. Indeed, in six consecutive years the Healey entries in this Italian classic established a record of successes unequalled by any other British marque. Furthermore, the Nash-Healeys had established performances at Le Mans which no other Healey model has since been able to equal.

Strangely, there appears to be no record of Nash-Healey competition achievements in the States, but perhaps some Healey enthusiast across the Atlantic may one day complete the missing chapter of Healey history.

This article was sent to the Club by former President Kent Martin. All hand written comments were made by Kent and members should use their own judgement as to whether these comments are correct or incorrect.

NASH - HEALEY CAR CLUB COVENTION 1985

June 1985

TO: NASH - HEALEY Owners

Dear Members:

The Western Nash-Healey Convention is a time for all of you to comm together and Show your car and talk about our cars . Please make an effort to attend the NASH meet in San Jose Calif. on the 4, 5, 6, and 7th of July. We welcome you with "FUN" and "FRINDSHIP" and a meet to remember.

Enclosed are the registration form and all of the information for you to have a good time . Betty and I are looking forward to seeing you.

"SPECIAL NOTE" The people from the Magazine " Collectible Automobile" will be at the meet to take pictures of the Nash-Healey cars for the up-coming article on the Nash-Healey . We want you to come and have your car represented in the article. Please bring your car..... or cars.

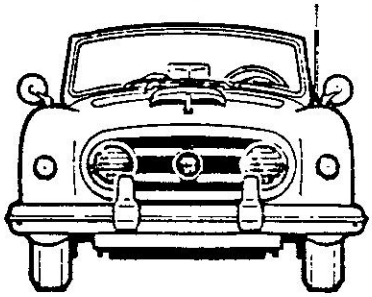
Some of the N-H 's on the west coast have been photographed for the article and we still want you to attend. We are trying very hard to have 14 NASH-HEALEYS at the Show on the 6th. Please do your part ! Last year in L.A. I was able to get seven cars together and I'm trying very hard to get 14 to attend. (Please don' t sit at home)

Sincerely. Sieg + Betty

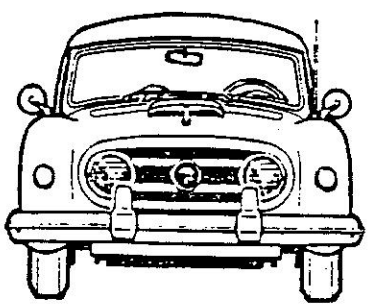
Sieg and Betty Wroebel

Western Director N-H C.C. Inc.

P.S. An invitation to all of you to stop by after the Meet at our home 1215 Pearl St. Alameda, Ca. 94501 (415-523-0454)



1215 Pearl Street
Alameda, CA 94501



MEMBERS WHO DID NOT REJOIN THE N-H.C.C.

Listed below are the names of members who did not rejoin the Club for the up-coming year. If you know them personally or will be seeing them in the near future put a bug in their ear and tell them the Club is still in existence and we would like to hear from them soon.

Chris Anusen	OR	Gary MacDonald	OR
Arthur Alexman	CA	Gordon McGregor	CA
John Bissonnette	FL	Jeffrey Moore	TX
Richard Bundy	CT	Pastor Mote	CO
Paul Capelli	WI	Gerald Newton	CA
W. Gary Cease	FL	George Nickole	MA
John Davis	VA	Edward Novotny	NY
Thomas Doll	MI	Charles Olson	CA
Bill Emerson	CA	Jim Paradiso	CA
Rudy Franco	CA	Frederick Roth	CA
Max Frye	OR	Alice Russell	VA
Boyd Goddard	CA	Carl Schreiber	TX
N. Greisheimer	PA	Heinz Schu	CA
Conrad Honsey	NM	Donald Shury	OH
Glenn Hunsucker	IN	Richard Snell	MI
Don Hutson	TN	Ted Stetler	MT
Steve LeFevre	CA	Charles Thomas	OR
C. Truman Libbey	MT	Frank Vollmer	PA
Robert Loudon	MO	Sieg Wroebel	CA

CLASSIFIED

WANTED: Tail light lens, steering wheel for 1954 Nash-Healey coupe: W. Fenton Meredith - 66 Ferncliff Avenue - Youngstown, Ohio 44512 (216)758-3542.

WANTED: Dealer Introductory Literature package for NASH Dealers to sell Austin & Healey line ('50's Era): Roland Provost - 616 Cabot Street - Winchester, MA 01890 (617)729-9386

WANTED: Name plates(2) Pinin Farina script at lower end of fenders, I have the emblems. Hal Freitag - 215 Camilo Ave. - Coral Gables, FL 33134 (305)446-6125.

WANTED: Front bumper, front bumper barces, wheel covers, jack, grill and any other items for 1951 Nash-Healey roadster: Charles Garber 1606 No. 85 - Omaha, NB 68114 (402)391-5270.

LETTERS FROM MEMBERS

Dear Joanne,

Enclosed please find dues for upcoming year. Also included is information about the July 3-4 Donald Healey Birthday Celebration being held in Condord, Mass., by the Northeast Region of Austin Healey Club.

I was at a recent toy show, and noticed that the Model of the 1953 Nash-Healey LeMans Coupe is now available in light green. I have the earlier version in silver, but the green looks really nice. These models are sold in finished form for $39 or kit form for $19 from: Miniature Cars - Box 221 - Bernardsville, N.J. 07924.

I mentioned in a previous letter that I built both a roadster and a 1954 coupe from these kits with very little difficulty. Mike Feingold and I plan to write a small article about the models with pictures as soon as we get together on a good day with a closeup lens.

I am presently out of jack-hole plugs and front air deflectors, and haven't decided whether I will make another run of these parts. I do have the following parts still available

Heavy Duty Blue Streak Points	$8.70
Heavy Duty Blue Streak Condenser	$3.35
Distributor Caps	$8.45
Distributor Rotor	$2.85
Set of six spark-plug cover boots	$6.50

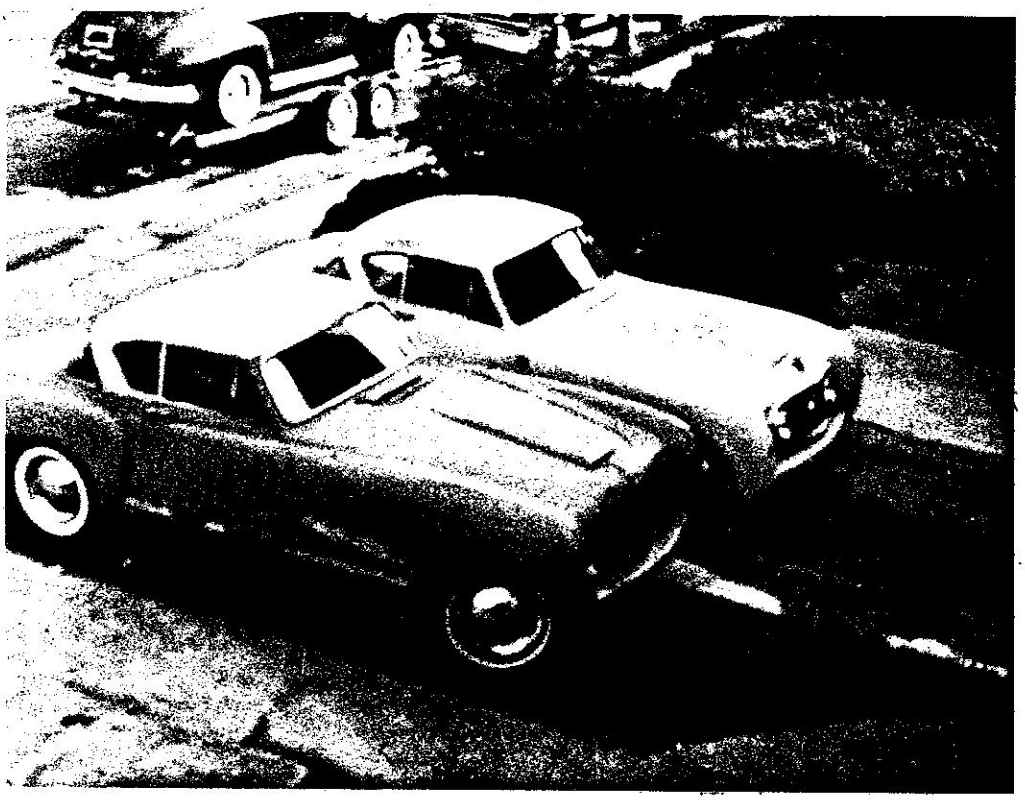
(These are large boots that keep the dirt from getting in the head around the spark plug. Like used on early slantsix Chrysler Products. These are available as a tune-up kit along with six Champion spark plugs for $35 plugs-points-condenser-cap-rotor and boots).

I received a phone call from Richard Kauffman recently. He wanted to know what I used for rear shocks on my car. I have since checked my notes. I used Monroe-Matic #2126N. Please include this in the newsletter for Richard.

I still have some Carburetor Rebuild Kits for the Carter YH Carburetors used on 1953 and 1954 models, $15.00 each.

Sincerely,
Ed Moore
Box 357
Bellingham, MA 02019

LETTERS (continued)



Hi Ray & Joanne,

Wanted to say HI, and also say how much I enjoy the Nash-Healey News! Betty and I look forward to receiving it each month or every other month. Thank you for doing a great job!

OH BOY!! $$$ Enclosed is a photo of my two 1954 Nash-Healeys and just wanted to let all of you know that number one is on the road and running just great. Now the body work and paint and then the leather. My second car??? Oh, why does it take so much money? We have been rebuilding the engine for 10 months now and looking for parts. I am amazed how much one can spend on just the engine. Labor approx $550, parts to date $480, machine work $240, now paint and etc. This may run into $2,000 plus! Well all for the love of a Nash-Healey.

Sincerely,
Sieg Wroebel
Alameda, CA

CLUB JACKET PATCHES

There are still quite a few 4" Nash-Healey Car Club jacket patches available. Price is $3.00 each or $2.50 each for 2 or more. Mail order to Joanne M. Soles, Editor - N.H.C.C. - 530 Edgewood Avenue - Trafford, PA 15085. Make check payable to NASH-HEALEY CAR CLUB.

NASH-HEALEY RACING MODIFICATIONS

Submitted by Mike Feingold

"The Nash-Healey is truly a fine sports car and is designed as such, but should not be considered as a competition car to be used for racing purposes. It is suggested that the factory be contacted for information pertaining to modifications for racing". Thus reads a portion of the foreward from the 1951 Nash-Healey Owner's Guide. Thirty years ago, at least one enthusiastic owner took this advice to heart and received the following reply from the factory's appointed technical advisor on the Nash-Healey, Mr. Carl Chakmakian. (Mr. Chakmakian is a current member of the Nash-Healey Car Club.)

L.D.L

MAY 24 1954 - 9 A.M.

Nash-Kelvinator Corporation

19250 PLYMOUTH ROAD, DETROIT 32, MICHIGAN

May 20, 1954

Mr. David E. Leber, Jr.
Vice Pres. & Gen. Mgr.
Lehigh Valley Oil Co.
Union Blvd. & Dauphin St.
Allentown, Pennsylvania

Dear Mr. Leber:

This will acknowledge your letter of May 13, 1954 addressed to Mr. L. T. Flegler, which has been referred to this office for handling regarding your Nash-Healey sports car.

The special engine with hemispherical combustion chamber head is not available domestically or abroad at this time nor is a competition kit. Two competition Nash-Healeys were entered in the 1952 Le Mans race. One of the cars used a Le Mans Dual Jetfire engine as used on the Ambassador while the other used the same engine with the special head and valve arrangement. The standard car finished in a noteable 3rd place while the special car retired early due to mechanical difficulties of the engine.

This Nash-Healey hemispherical chambered head, as described in the November 1952 issue of Road and Track is undergoing exhaustive tests at the present time. However, the work has not reached that stage at which a comprehensive evaluation can be effected. Therefore, we can only say at this time that the project and many others are continuing on an experimental basis to determine if the new cylinder head is feasible from both the performance and production cost standpoints. The publication was a bit premature in that Nash had not authorized Mr. Sampietro, who has never been associated with Nash Motors.

We as a manufacturer do not produce or distribute a special competition kit which would make the car more suitable for "all-out" sports car racing competition. We appreciate your worthwhile endeavors to extract more performance from your Nash-Healey, so to the accomplishment of this end result we shall pass along our findings on the subject in answer to your questions.

First of all, the engine size should be determined as follows:

	Prior to Car Serial #N-2250 and Engine #1163	At Car Serial #N-2250
BHP	125 @ 4000 RPM	140 @ 4000 RPM
Max. Torque	210 ft. lb. @ 1600 RPM	230 ft. lb. @ 2000 RPM
Displacement	234.8 cu. in. (3850 c.c.)	252.6 cu. in. (4140 c.c.)
Bore and Storke	3-3/8 X 4-3/8	3-1/2 X 4-3/8
Compression Ratio	8:1	8:1

The above figures indicate a basic difference in the bore size, although the engine

block is the same. It is possible to have the block bored-out to 3-1/2" and fit in a set of new pistons which are currently available from any Nash dealer since the engine used in the Nash-Healey is the same powerplant used as optional equipment for our Nash Ambassador. Increasing the displacement will prove beneficial throughout the RPM range, and this change is considered as a stock modification, which would not place the car in the modified class in a sports car race.

We have heard of a few isolated cases where Nash-Healey owners have gone one step further on displacement by changing a 3-1/2" bore to 3-5/8" which results in 271 cu. in. (4440 c.c.). This can be done but a chance is being taken in that the cylinder wall thickness will be rather small. We therefore cannot recommend this modification since it is strictly at the owners option, and furthermore, we do not have pistons available, which are only obtainable from manufactures of special pistons.

Assuming that the engine size is 252.6 cu. in., a few refinements can be made. The head should be removed to allow for relieving, porting, polishing of all passages and to eliminate all sharp corners. The carburetor-to-head connection can be better matched by sizing the mating inlet connection more accurately.

At present, we do not contemplate a new engine that would be suitable for the Nash-Healey, which at present is in Class C (3000-5000 c.c.) according to the International F.I.A. displacement classes.

Special valves are not available since it is opinioned that the present design is most satisfactory. The camshaft now used is desirable for the best all-round performance. A full-race camshaft is fine for speed but the speed grind is not suitable for the low-end. We regret that we do not have available a special camshaft, but it is entirely possible to have a special grind 3/4 type race cam instead of a full-race type made up by independent manufacturers.

We have included the crankshaft timing diagrams for the standard camshaft and a Healey high speed camshaft #3136381. While we do not have any of these special cams available for distribution, we will furnish a complete set of drawings to you that can be used if you wish to have a camshaft reground by an independent concern.

The Auto-Lite AL-5 (long reach) spark plugs are furnished as original equipment and have proven to be satisfactory. However, Champion H-8 plugs are very suitable also for high speed use. We have enclosed a listing of spark plugs which will be of some value in selecting a different brand.

We have no specific recommendations as to ignition system modifications. Some owners have reported that the special Mallory Magspark ignition systems are good for high RPM performance. We have not experimented with the magneto systems but the Vertex type is reported to be suitable if a particular owner wishes to use a magneto for all-out competition.

A Stewart-Warner, Model 220-A, fuel pump (or an equivalent model Bendix) can be installed near the fuel tank to aid in building up fuel pressure to the engine driven fuel pump under the adverse conditions of hot weather, rapid acceleration, and sharp cornering.

The rear axle ratio presently used is a 4.1:1 (41-10) and is the only one available for all-round use. A 4.4:1 ring-gear and pinion set can be had from Nash dealers but this

is only suitable for acceleration in that the engine would be "wound-out" before a suitable top speed could be reached. The other ratio is a 3.15:1 (used on Nash cars with Hydra-Matic) which would be suitable only for top speed work while being very poor in the low and middle RPM range, which would be unsuitable for sport car races where rapid acceleration is required.

We have no modification kits for either the SU British carburetor or the Carter carburetor. A slightly richer mixture jet and needle can be fitted to your SU carburetors, which gains are opinioned questionable — although some owners say that the richer jet and needle does help throughout the RPM range. Nash dealers usually do not stock the optional jets and needles but an established sports car dealer should have these items.

The compression ratio of 8:1 has proven to be very satisfactory for all purposes. At the owner's option, the compression can be run up to 8.5:1 but the use of at least 95 octane or more gasoline is a must. A slight gain throughout the RPM range can be had by increasing compression, however this modification has its limitations.

We are currently experimenting with the installation of a supercharger which is produced by the Mc Culloch Motors Corporation, Los Angeles, California. If a blower were installed on your Nash-Healey, it would automatically be placed in Class B (5000-5500 c.c.). Our development work is still in the very experimental stage since a few serious difficulties have been encountered. If the project proves to be a success, the blower may be made available to the public for purchase either from us or more probably from Mc Culloch in kit form. It is repeated that this project is experimental and therefore nothing can be released by us in the way of information or parts. The subject is mentioned since it may be of some interest to keep in mind for the future.

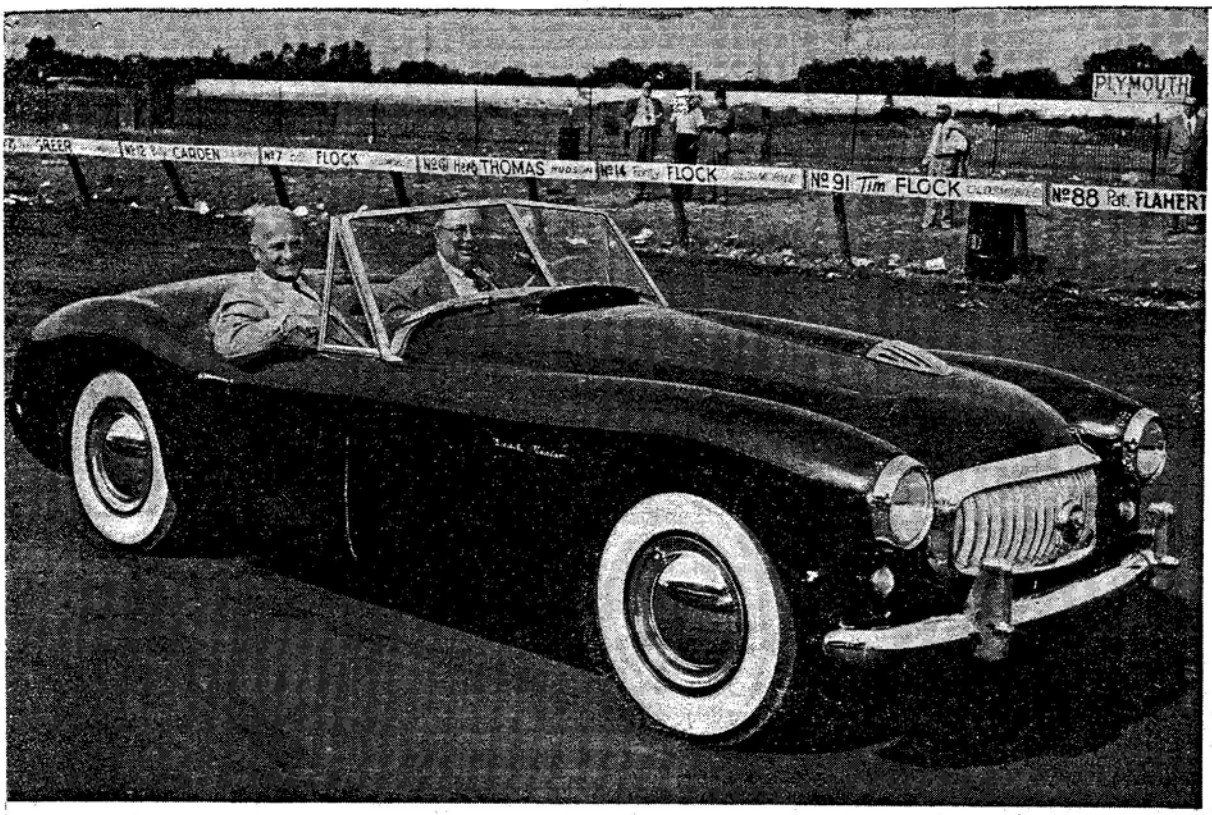
It appears that we have made a long story out of a short one, but I have endeavored to supply the available information, such as it is. As a fellow SCCA member I can appreciate your sincere endeavors towards competition with the Nash-Healey, but the basic concept and development of the car has placed it in a rather semi-competitive or touring sports car class. I sincerely wish you well, and regret that special modified equipment is not available but if we can be of further service please contact this office.

Suitable manifold design of head.
16° x 8° Centers of carburetors

Very truly yours,

C. Chakmakian
Asst. Technical Advisor
Product Information Dept.

bh
Enc.
cc: L. T. Flegler



Here is a standard production Nash-Healey, soon after its introduction, with the late George Mason (who was President of the Nash Kelvinator Corporation at the time) at the wheel and Donald Healey as his passenger

FROM PERRANPORTH TO ABINGDON

PETER BROWNING continues his story of the development of Healey and Austin-Healey cars

Part Three: The Nash-Healey

IN December 1949 Donald Healey embarked on a sales tour of the United States and it was a chance meeting aboard the *Queen Elizabeth* with George Mason, President of the Nash Kelvinator Corporation of America, which began the story of that unusual Anglo-American car, the Nash-Healey.

Although many 'Silverstones' had been exported to the States, the Riley-engined Healeys had not really satisfied the demand for a Healey sports car. It was natural that these overseas buyers should expect more than 2.4 litres under the bonnet to compete on level terms with the more powerful American models. Furthermore, they preferred a car with which they were mechanically familiar, a car which they knew how to service and for which spare parts were readily available. Donald Healey was quick to realise the demand for a new Healey sports car with British-built body and chassis, but incorporating mechanical components of well-known American manufacture.

The meeting between the patrons of the Nash and Healey concerns happily resulted in complete agreement on a combined Anglo-American design, and soon after Healey's return from the States the Nash and Healey engineers began work on the new model.

THE PROTOTYPE

Early 1950 saw the first of the 3.8-litre Nash engines delivered to the Warwick factory for trials with a modified 'Silverstone' chassis. The Healey chassis frame had to be slightly modified to accommodate the larger engine, gearbox and overdrive, but apart from these alterations the Nash mechanical components fitted snugly into the 'Silverstone' frame. The traditional Healey trailing-link suspension was retained at the front, but coil springs were fitted at the rear with the axle located by a track bar. The 'Dual Jetfire' six-cylinder o.h.v. Nash engine was fitted with twin S.U. carburetters, an aluminium cylinder head, seven-bearing crankshaft and a special sports camshaft. An unusual feature of this engine was the arrangement of the manifold passages, which were formed directly into the main engine casting. They were thus water-cooled on two sides, providing even fuel distribution and improved temperature control. On an 8.1 to 1 compression ratio the power output was rated as 125 b.h.p. at 4,000 r.p.m., and in unit with the three-speed Nash gearbox and Borg Warner overdrive this engine gave a useful increase in top speed and general performance over the Riley-powered 'Silverstone'.

The Nash-engined prototype was completed in April 1950, just in time for a test run in that year's Mille Miglia. With his son Geoffrey as co-driver, Donald Healey entered the new prototype for this classic 1,050-mile road race around the northern half of Italy. As recounted in the last article in this series, the 1950 event was run in atrocious weather and the Healey was amongst the many entries delayed by off-the-road excursions. But the new model completed the course, finishing ninth in the

Top was cut off this car and it became #10

over 2-litre sports car class and 177th overall from 383 starters. The trip to Italy had been an effective test run for the new car, encouraging the Warwick engineers to start preparations for an entry in the 1950 Le Mans 24 Hour Race.

LE MANS DEBUT

For long-distance racing on the very fast Sarthe circuit, the Nash-powered 'Silverstone' prototype was fitted with a prominent head-fairing for the driver, and the rear bodywork was modified to accommodate long-range fuel tanks. To drive the car, Donald Healey engaged the services of two experienced sports car men, Duncan Hamilton and Tony Rolt.

This one became #11

In 1950, this special Nash-Healey (left, with Tony Rolt driving) finished fourth overall at Le Mans, averaging 87.6 m.p.h. The following year a closed coupé was entered, again driven by Rolt and Duncan Hamilton, which finished sixth overall against stronger opposition. Its average speed had risen to 89.3 m.p.h., and in 1952 the same car, converted to open form, finished third at 91.5 m.p.h.

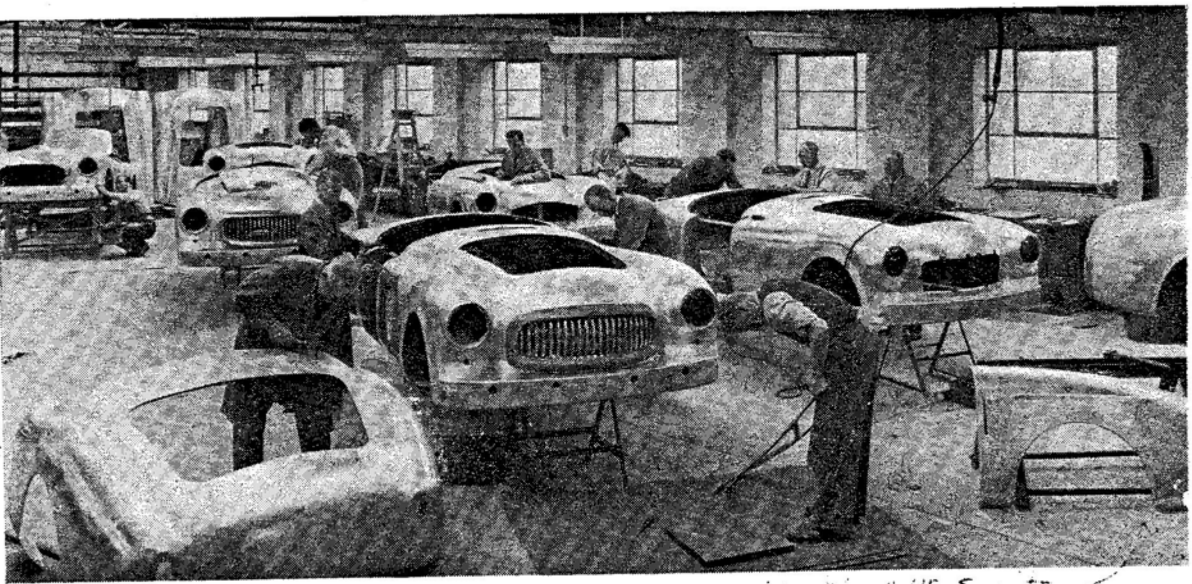
There was a strong entry for the 1950 event, with nine British marques matched against French Talbots and Delahayes, Italian Ferraris and the American Cadillacs. As expected, the Talbots and Ferraris set the pace, but Rolt and Hamilton found themselves amongst the first dozen and the Healey pit were content to let the faster cars wear themselves out in the initial stages. This proved a wise policy; by half-distance there had been so many retirements amongst the leaders that the Healey had climbed to fourth place behind the two leading Talbots and the only surviving Jaguar.

As dawn came, the efforts of the Warwick team nearly met with a sad end when a French car rammed the Healey in the stern. The Healey shot off the course, but Duncan Hamilton performed some spectacular agricultural manoeuvres, and, finding himself back on the track and facing in the same direction as the rest of the traffic, pressed on to the pits. A hasty inspection revealed damaged suspension and rear axle, but it was decided that they should rejoin the race and hope for the best. The Healey struggled on. With four hours of racing to the finish, the Jaguar retired from third place, so Rolt and Hamilton moved up behind the two Talbots, which were touring round with an unassailable lead. Now interest focused on an exciting battle for third place as a 5-litre Cadillac-Allard moved up to challenge the Healey. They were two sick cars racing for the flag; the Allard jammed in top gear, Rolt and Hamilton nursing their damaged suspension and now having to drive with failing brakes. After a desperate battle in the 23rd hour the Allard managed to take the lead, but not before Rolt had recorded a splendidly fast lap at 94.3 m.p.h. So the Nash-Healey took the flag in fourth place overall, the second British car to finish, covering 2,103 miles at 87.6 m.p.h. and breaking the previous class distance record. The

This scene is not only not at Warwick but is evidently not at Panel-Craft Ltd. either, It would appear that Jensen built the 51 Nash-

A scene at the Warwick factory during 1952, when standard Nash-Healey bodies were being built, largely by hand

Healey bodies as that is an Austin A40 Sports rear fender at far lower right and the bodies for these were ~~made by~~ Jensen.



Austin A40 Sports made by Jensen!

class and a commendable 30th in general classification.

LE MANS AGAIN

Two months later came Le Mans, for which Healeys prepared a single car, carrying their streamlining ideas even further by building a new coupé body around the lines of the original prototype. Panelled in aluminium on a lightweight steel frame, the new bodywork featured a deep windscreen and side windows offering exceptional visibility for a closed car. Special attention was paid to the cooling of the brake-drums, with fresh-air scoops set in the front body panels. The driving compartment was also ventilated by an ingenious system of fresh-air ducting. Duncan Hamilton and Tony Rolt piloted the Healey for the second year running and again they chose to take things easy for the first few hours, letting the Jaguar, Talbot and Cunningham opposition set the pace.

Again this proved a wise policy and by midnight the Healey lay well placed, Rolt and Hamilton enjoying a comfortable and uneventful drive in the coupé. The retirement of the leading Talbot and Jaguar in the early hours of the morning brought the Healey up to sixth place, improving to fifth when another Talbot retired shortly afterwards. Lapping consistently at a little over 90 m.p.h., the Healey even snatched fourth place for a short time, but Rolt and Hamilton soon had to concede this position to a very fast Cunningham. For the second year running the Healey had to fight every minute of the 24 hours for its place amongst the leaders. This time Rolt, and Hamilton put up a brave fight against an Aston Martin challenge, but failed by less than half-a-mile to hold position. The Nash-Healey finished sixth overall and fourth in the class, averaging 89.3 m.p.h.

FARINA STYLING

In February 1952 it was announced that future Nash-Healeys would be available with new coachwork by the Italian stylist, Pinin Farina. The Healey was thus named the 'three-nation sports car'. Engines and transmissions were shipped over from Nash Motors of America to Warwick for installation in the British-built Healey chassis, these assemblies were then sent over to the Farina coachworks in Turin, and completed cars were finally despatched back to the States.

The new Farina body gave the Healey a sleeker line. The V-windscreen was replaced by a one-piece curved screen and the headlamps were now incorporated in the Nash radiator grille, permitting a lower bonnet-line. At the rear the flowing wing-line was embellished with restrained tail-fins to appeal to American buyers. Farina later introduced a 'Le Mans' fixed head coupé form of this body, but the convertible coachwork remained unchanged.

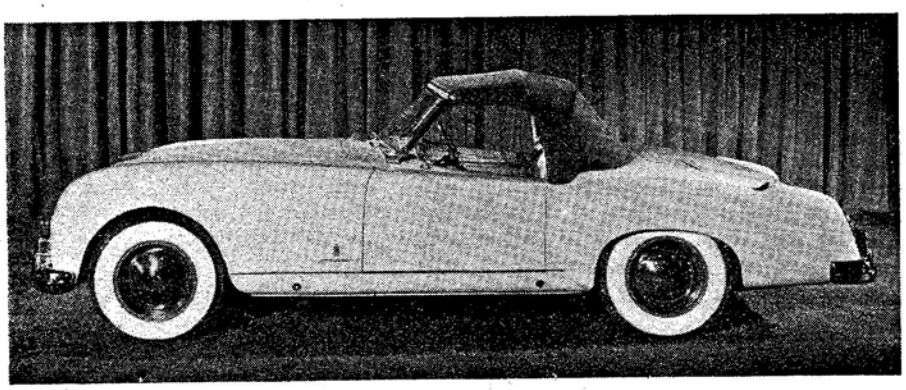
From February 1952 the Farina-bodied cars were fitted with an improved version

continued on page 13

Healey entries in International Events

Phase Three: The Nash-Healey

Date	Event	Drivers	Car	Results
April 1950	Mille Miglia, Italy	D. Healey G. Healey	'Silverstone' Prototype	9th class 177th overall
June 1950	Le Mans 24 Hour Race, France	D. Hamilton A. Rolt	'Silverstone' Prototype (14)	3rd class 4th overall
April 1951	Mille Miglia, Italy	D. Healey G. Healey	Standard body (406)	4th class 30th overall
May 1951	B.R.D.C. Prod. Car Race, Silverstone	A. Rolt	Standard body	6th overall
June 1951	British Empire Trophy, I.O.M.	R. Parnell	Standard body (26)	Retired
June 1951	Le Mans 24 Hour Race, France	D. Hamilton A. Rolt	Coupé prototype (19)	4th class 6th overall
May 1952	Mille Miglia, Italy	D. Healey G. Healey	Coupé prototype (550)	Crashed
		L. Johnson W. McKenzie		4th class 7th overall
June 1952	Le Mans 24 Hour Race, France	L. Johnson T. Wisdom	Coupé prototype modified as open (10)	1st class 3rd overall 1st British 2nd Index
		G. Cabantous P. Veyron	'Silverstone' Prototype	Retired
July 1952	Alpine Rally, France	E. Wadsworth		Crashed
May 1953	Mille Miglia, Italy	J. Fitch —Willday	Special body (540)	Retired
June 1953	Le Mans 24 Hour Race, France	L. Johnson H. Hadley		11th overall 4th Index
		G. Cabantous P. Veyron		Retired



From February 1952, the Nash-Healeys were given a handsome new body styled by Pinin Farina and built at Turin. With American engine and transmission, British chassis and Italian bodywork, it became known as the 'three-nation sports car'